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The Wishing Table

Brothers Grimm

Once upon a time there was a tailor with three sons. They weren't rich. One day the tailor thought it was high time the boys left home to learn a trade. So he sent all three of them away.

The oldest son was apprenticed as a furniture maker. 'Boy, said the teacher, 'I thank you for your enthusiasm for the trade. You can do it yourself now.' As a parting gift, he was given a small wooden table. When you call out, 'Table, Deck Yourself,' the table will deck itself with the most delicious food. The son was very happy, now his father would never have to worry about food again.

On the way home, the boy passed an inn. 'You can sleep here,' said the innkeeper, 'but there is no food.' 'Don't bother,' said the boy. He set the table down and said, 'Table, Deck Yourself'. On the little table the most delicious meals appeared. The innkeeper couldn't believe his eyes! Night fell and the boy went to sleep. The next day he brought the table to his father. His father was happy that he had learned a trade. But the wonder table had his greatest attention. 'Table, deck yourself!' said the son. But...nothing happened! The son didn't understand what was going on.

The second son was apprenticed as a miller. When his apprenticeship was over, he was rewarded for his hard work with a donkey. But it was not just any donkey. The donkey, upon hearing, 'Donkey stretch!' all threw gold coins from under its tail. The boy got on the donkey to go home. Now his father never had to work again.



On the way home, he passed the same inn where his brother had slept. 'Can I sleep here?' he asked the innkeeper. 'If you have money, always!' the innkeeper replied. The son walked over to his donkey, and called out 'Bricklebrit!' He caught the coins in a pouch. The innkeeper, who happened to see it, was dumbfounded! The next day the son continued on his donkey on his way to his father. Back home, he couldn't believe that the donkey was no longer giving coins. 'I don't understand what is going on!' he cried desperately. The father shook his head. 'It's a good thing at least you learned a good trade,' the man said, not quite knowing what to make of it. He wrote his third son a letter about

the table and the donkey.

The third son had been apprenticed as a carpenter. He read the letter to his teacher. The latter said, 'I think your brothers have been robbed.' He gave the son a bag with a club. 'Take this gift from me as a thank you for all your hard work. If you call out, 'Cudgel in the sack!' the bat will give whoever deserves it a good beating.'



On his way home, the son passed by the inn, where his brothers had also spent the night. He asked the innkeeper if he had anything to eat. Yes,' replied the innkeeper, 'you can eat as much as you want, whenever you want. And the son heard the innkeeper in the kitchen shout 'Table, deck yourself!'. Within a second there was a hot meal on the table. That's wonderful,' said the boy, 'I've never seen someone do it that fast. But I have an even greater miracle here. And he pointed to the bag. The innkeeper asked what it was, but the son refused to tell him. That night the innkeeper snuck into his room, just as the son had expected. 'Cudgel in the sack!' cried the son, and the innkeeper received the biggest beating he had ever had. 'Give me back my brothers' table and donkey,' the son spoke, 'or the beating will last forever.'

And that is how the son arrived at his father's house with an extraordinary table and an extraordinary donkey, and his father never had to work again. And all four lived happily ever after.



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